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REMARKS

Claims 1-30 remain pending in this application. Claims 12, 22, 25, 27, 28 and 30 have been amended via this paper to more clearly define the invention. These amendments should in no way be construed as being made to distinguish the prior art, therefore, the scope of all claims and claim limitations shall be construed to protect all equivalent structures and functions.

The Applicants wish to acknowledge the Examiner's efforts in review of this application and to express appreciation for the timeliness of the Official Office Action dated March 28, 2005.

Turning now to the DETAILED ACTION portion of the Official Office Action, paragraph 3, the Examiner has rejected claims 1-17 and 22-30 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Number 2005/0007645 A1, to Tonar et al. With regard to claim 1, the Examiner has pointed to page 21, paragraphs 184 and 185, page 25, paragraph 206, lines 9-13 and page 29, paragraph 239, lines 3-8 of Tonar et al. as being of particular relevance. The Applicants respectfully submit that known backlit liquid crystal displays do not have backlighting associated with each individual character that is independently controllable; the backlighting in known liquid crystal displays is turned on and off collectively not per character. Therefore, the Applicants submit that Tonar et al. does not teach, suggest or imply a rearview mirror

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assembly, comprising: an information display at least partially positioned behind a reflective element with respect to an anticipated viewer; said information display comprising a negative mode, backlit, liquid crystal display having at least two characters, each of said characters has individual backlighting associated therewith, wherein said backlighting of a given character is controllable independent of backlighting of any other character as recited in claim 1 of the present application. Since claims 2-8 depend from claim 1 the Applicants submit that claims 1-8 are in condition for allowance over the art of record.

With regard to claim 9, the Examiner has pointed to page 21, paragraphs 184 and 185, page 25, paragraph 206, lines 9-13, page 29, paragraph 239, lines 3-8 and page 30, paragraph 249, lines 5-8 and paragraph 253, lines 4-5 of Tonar et al. as being of particular relevance. The Applicants respectfully submit that known liquid crystal displays do not incorporate display drivers having spare outputs that are utilized to control associated backlighting. The backlighting is turned on collectively, independent of the liquid crystal display characters via means other than the display driver. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully submit that Tonar et al. does not teach, suggest or imply an information display, comprising: a liquid crystal display having at least two characters with each character having associated backlighting; and a display driver having more outputs than said liquid crystal display has characters, wherein at least one output of said display driver is used to control said backlighting as recited in claim 9 of the current application. Furthermore, in that claims 10-11 depend from claim

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9, the Applicants submit that claims 9-11 are in condition for allowance over the art of record.

With regard to claim 12, the Applicants submit that Tonar et al. does not teach, suggest or imply a rearview mirror assembly, comprising: a backlit liquid crystal display positioned behind an automatically dimming reflective element, wherein the intensity of said backlit liquid crystal display is a function of the reflectivity of said automatically dimming reflective element, said liquid crystal display having at least two characters, each of said characters has individual backlighting associated therewith, wherein said backlighting of a given character is controllable independent of backlighting of any other character as now recited. Furthermore, in that claims 13-17 depend from claim 12, the Applicants submit that claims 12-17 are in condition for allowance over the art of record.

With regard to claim 22, the Applicants submit that Tonar et al. does not teach, suggest or imply a rearview mirror assembly, comprising: an information display and a reflective element, wherein said reflective element is at least partially transmissive and an optimum light ray wavelength transmission of said reflective element is substantially equal to the predominant wavelength of light rays emitted by said information display, said information display is a liquid crystal display having at least two characters, each of said characters has individual backlighting associated therewith, wherein said backlighting of a given character is controllable independent of backlighting of any other character as now recited. Furthermore, in that claims 23 and 24 depend from claim 22,

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the Applicants submit that claims 22-24 are in condition for allowance over the art of record.

With regard to claim 25, the Applicants submit that Tonar et al. does not teach, suggest or imply a rearview mirror assembly, comprising: a backlit liquid crystal display positioned behind an automatically dimming reflective element, wherein the intensity of said backlit liquid crystal display is a function of an ambient light sensor, said liquid crystal display having at least two characters, each of said characters has individual backlighting associated therewith, wherein said backlighting of a given character is controllable independent of backlighting of any other character as now recited.

Furthermore, in that claim 26 depends from claim 25, the Applicants submit that claims 25 and 26 are in condition for allowance over the art of record.

With regard to claim 27, the Applicants submit that Tonar et al. does not teach, suggest or imply a rearview mirror assembly, comprising: a backlit liquid crystal display positioned behind an automatically dimming reflective element, wherein the intensity of said backlit liquid crystal display is a function of an glare light sensor, said liquid crystal display having at least two characters, each of said characters has individual backlighting associated therewith, wherein said backlighting of a given character is controllable independent of backlighting of any other character as now recited.

Therefore, the Applicants submit that claim 27 is in condition for allowance over the art of record.

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With regard to claim 28, the Applicants submit that Tonar et al. does not teach, suggest or imply a rearview mirror assembly, comprising: a backlit liquid crystal display positioned behind an automatically dimming reflective element, wherein the contrast of said backlit liquid crystal display is a function of an ambient light sensor, said liquid crystal display having at least two characters, each of said characters has individual backlighting associated therewith, wherein said backlighting of a given character is controllable independent of backlighting of any other character as now recited. Furthermore, in that claim 29 depends from claim 28, the Applicants submit that claims 28 and 29 are in condition for allowance over the art of record.

With regard to claim 30, the Applicants submit that Tonar et al. does not teach, suggest or imply a rearview mirror assembly, comprising: a backlit liquid crystal display positioned behind an automatically dimming reflective element, wherein the contrast of said backlit liquid crystal display is a function of an glare light sensor, said liquid crystal display having at least two characters, each of said characters has individual backlighting associated therewith, wherein said backlighting of a given character is controllable independent of backlighting of any other character as now recited. Therefore, the Applicants submit that claim 30 is in condition for allowance over the art of record.

Turning to paragraph 5, the Examiner has rejected claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,645,337, to Gleckman. The Applicants respectfully submit that the diffuser of Gleckman, like all other known diffusers utilized in

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conjunction with liquid crystal displays, randomly diffuses the associated light.

Therefore, the Applicants submit that Gleckman does not teach, suggest or imply an information display, comprising: a diffuser positioned between a backlit liquid crystal display and backlighting associated with said liquid crystal display, wherein said diffuser redirects light rays emitted by said backlighting as a function of at least one of the following; the position of said liquid crystal display relative to at least one anticipated viewer and a planar surface of said diffuser relative to a viewing angle of at least one anticipated viewer as recited in claim 18 of the current application. Therefore, the Applicants submit that claim 18 is in condition for allowance over the art of record.

Turning to paragraph 7, the Examiner has rejected claims 19-21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tonar et al. In view of Gleckman. For at least the reasons expressed above, the Applicants respectfully submit that neither Tonar or Gleckman, taken individually or collectively, teach, suggest or imply a rearview mirror assembly, comprising: an information display at least partially positioned behind a reflective element with respect to an anticipated viewer; said information display comprising a negative mode, backlit, liquid crystal display having at least two characters, each of said characters has individual backlighting associated therewith, wherein said backlighting of a given character is controllable independent of backlighting of any other character; a display driver having more outputs than said liquid crystal display has characters, wherein at least one output of said display driver is used to control said backlighting; and a diffuser positioned between a backlit liquid crystal

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display and backlighting associated with said liquid crystal display, wherein said diffuser redirects light rays emitted by said backlighting as a function of at least one of the following; the position of said liquid crystal display relative to at least one anticipated viewer and a planar surface of said diffuser relative to a viewing angle of at least one anticipated viewer; wherein said reflective element is automatically dimming and the intensity of said backlit liquid crystal display is a function of the reflectivity of said automatically dimming reflective element; and wherein said reflective element is at least partially transmissive and an optimum light ray wavelength transmission of said reflective element is substantially equal to the predominant wavelength of light rays emitted from said information display, as recited in claim 18 of the current application. Furthermore, in that claims 20 and 21 depend from claim 19, the Applicants submit that claims 19-21 are in condition for allowance over the art of record.

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The Applicants submit that claims 1-30 are in condition for allowance and that no new subject matter is introduced via this paper. The Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. Please contact the undersigned should additional information be required.

Respectfully submitted,
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By: Gentex Corporation

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Date

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